A COPY OF A

Remonstrance

LATELY DELIVERED

IN TO THE

ASSEMBLY.

BY

Thomas Goodwin. *William Bridge.*
Philip Nie.
Jeremy Burroughs. *Sidrach Simson.*
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Declaring the Grounds and Reasons of their declining to bring in to the *Assembly*, their Modell of *Church-Government.*

LONDON:
Printed in the Yeer, 1645.

To the READER.

THe Copie of this ensuing Remonstrance (for so I title it, as deeming it no other) lately delivered in to the Assembly by the Dissenting Brethren, falling under my view (by a divine providence) I endeavoured a transcript thereof, ayming at no other end but the reserving it by me for my private and particular satisfaction. Since which time upon occasionall converses with divers of the Presbyterian party, I have been an often eare-witnesse of many untrue and unjust aspersions which reflected upon the Reverend Authors, as if the Independants (so they are pleased to call them) could not, or durst not (according to the demand of the Assembly) produce a Model and bring in thither, such a Frame of Church-government with the Reasons and grounds thereof as they contend for; or rather, that they had in their conceptions some Chimæra, or some Utopian Frame, which in the issue would prove either abortive or ridiculous; and that therefore being privy to the weakness of their own principles, they have resulted onely, in stead of a perfect Body, an airy, and (to use some of their own words) a rayling accusation against the Reverend Assembly, intending nothing lesse then the product of a Compleated Frame, and nothing more than the cheating of the people, whom they know do expect such an accomplisht platform. These and the like undue bespatterings, dasht from the mouthes of some whom I dare not but call Brethren, and that upon those who for their personall endowments they themselves acknowledge to be both pious and learned; and frequently hinted into the minds and thoughts of the godly and well-affected of either part (who

(who at preſent by reaſon thereof are at a loſſe both in their judgements and expectations) coming within my hearing and obſervation; I found (weighing the rationall conſiderations exhibited in this Remonſtrance for their refuſall to deliver in to the Aſſembly their Model of Church-government, as was impoſed on them) an irreſiſtable dictate from my conſcience, to convert the Manuſcript into a printed Copie. Wherein the ingenious Reader may clearly perceive, and truly judge what was the direct Remora that deterred them (contrary to their primary reſolves) from doing that which was required by the Aſſembly, and what likewiſe are their reall intentions for the future, namely, to let the Churches have the benefit of what they have prepared to that purpoſe, which I am confident in as convenient a time as is ſuitable to ſuch a work, they will perfect and exhibit to open view. As for the godly and learned Authors themſelves, I humbly crave their pardon that I have preſumed without their knowledge to preſent this their Copie to the world, profeſſing that no ſiniſter ends at all byaſſed me: 'Twas onely the ſatisfying of my own Conſcience, and my earneſt deſires that the truth and candour of their cauſe, and their proceedings therein, may (notwithſtanding the beſmearings that others endeavour to caſt on both) be rightly reſented by the godly and judicious, that hath ſwayed my reſolutions: which ends if I attain, I have enough.

December 12. 1644. We gave in *Reaſons of our diſſenting*, to this Aſſembly, *againſt the ſubordination of Synods*, and they were committed to be anſwered and brought in.

April 4. 1645. An Order was made by this Aſſembly, *that the Brethren of this Aſſembly, who have formerly entred their diſſents to the Presbyteriall Government, ſhall be a Committee to bring in the whole Frame of their Judgements, concerning Church Government, in a body with their grounds and Reaſons.*

It was alſo by this Aſſembly, lately impoſed on us, to *make report of what we had done in the Committee.*

HOw willing and ready we have been from the beginning of the Diſcuſſions in this Reverend Aſſembly, to make known what ever we hold, concerning *Church government*, as we have had publique teſtimony in this Aſſembly, ſo we have manifold inſtances and evidences of it; Witneſſe that conſtant, free, and open expreſſing our ſelves upon all occaſions, and in all queſtions propounded to the debate, with offers to give an open Account at any time, in what ever ſhould be asked us by any Brother. Our profferring divers times to bring in Propoſitions, ſtated to our ſenſe for the diſpute, and when we were made a Committee to that purpoſe, in the point of *Ordination*, and did bring our Judgements concerning it for a diſpute, It was laid aſide. And at another time, when we our ſelves brought in papers, giving the ſtate of the queſtion, about that *extraordinary way of Ordination*, which were read, and returned back unto us, it being publiquely profeſſed that *that was not an allowed way and courſe of this Aſſembly, for any of the Brethren to bring in papers, unleſſe they were made a Committee by the Aſſembly it ſelf.* And ſo we were prevented of doing the like for time to come.

Likewiſe our frequent complainings of the ſtating of queſtions, ſo that we could not fully argue for our Judgements, we being bound up to the queſtions as ſtated by you. The uſuall anſwer to our Complaints heerin being, *That the Aſſembly ſate not to argue the*

opinions

opinions of a few men, but that if we had any thing to say to the assertion brought in, we might.

As also our earnest contending to have some questions (*which you all know are the greatest and most fundamentall points*) fairly disputed and debated, is a sufficient testimony of this our willingnesse. As in the entrance into the dispute of *Government*, the first day, we pressed the handling of this, *That there is a platform of Government for the Churches, under the Gospel, laid down in the Scripture*, and desired to have discussed, *what are the sure and certain wayes, whereby we may judge what of Government, is held forth* Jure divino *therein*, which should have been fundamentall to all the disputes that were to follow: and this was professedly laid aside by you, which therfore in none of the subsequent debates, we could renew, and thus Arguments were cut off, It being that great and necessary *Medium*, by which the particulars should be confirmed, and in a manner, the whole controversie decided; the greatest difference that were likely to grow betwixt us, being this, *That the forms of Government, you pretend to, and we deny, are asserted to be* Jure divino.

In like manner that other next great question, about *the intire power in Congregations, that have a sufficient Presbytery for all Censures*, which as it is in order the first that presents it self for discussion (as was urged) so also it is one of the greatest points in difference betwixt us and you: Yet the debate of this was not onely denied the first place in the dispute, but was to this day declined by you; Although to have it argued was contended for by us, and not by us onely, but by many of those, that are for a subordinate government thereof to Synods. And though earnest desires and motions for it were renewed and inculcated, yet were they as often laid aside. Yea and this, although it was once expresly commended by the grand Committee of the Honorable Members of both Houses, joyned with twelve Divines of the Assembly, to be next disputed, as the best means, both of expedition, and of ending the Controversie.

And over and above all this, to argue this our willingnesse to dispute our way, In the aforesaid Honorable Committee appointed by an Order of the Honorable House of *Commons*, to find out wayes, of accommodating different Judgements in the Assembly, the Sub-Committee of Divines, consisting of two of us, and foure others,

others, appointed by that Honorable Committee to prepare waies and Propoſitions of Accommodation, brought in the main and moſt of what practically we deſired, and we therein added, *That if ſuch a libertie ſhall ſeem in the wiſdome of this Honorable Committee, to be ſo prejudiciall to the peace of the Church as not to be permitted, we humbly deſire, the doctrinall principles wherein we differ about Church-Government, may be taken into ſerious conſideration, and ſome other way of accommodation in practiſe thought upon, as ſhall ſeem fit to this Honorable Committee:* and this was preſented to that Honorable Committee and thoſe twelve of the Aſſembly, to be tranſmitted, whether to the Honorable Houſes, or the Aſſembly as they ſhould think meet.

After this, when upon occaſion of ſomething brought in by one Brother, and intertained, we took hold of that example, and one of us, with conſent of the reſt, brought in ſeven Propoſitions, which contained matter of difference betwixt us, profeſſing, *That if this Reverend Aſſembly would debate them, or any one of them, we would bring in more, untill we had brought in all the Frame, and the Aſſembly themſelves ſhould pick and chuſe what they would debate, and what not.* But theſe Propoſitions were rejected with a refuſall to debate any one of them.

And after all this, though the main parts of the Presbyteriall government, had been then voted by the Aſſembly, and ſent up to the Honorable Houſes (as, namely, that about *Ordination*, and *the Presbyteriall government over many Congregations*, as alſo concerning *the Subordination of Nationall, Provinciall and Claſſicall Aſſemblies*) and there was not much remaining about Church-government, to be concluded in this Aſſembly: yet this Reverend Aſſembly requiring, (by occaſion of a book publiſhed, that reflected on theſe proceedings, that we had no hand in, nor knowledge of) *a whole Frame of Government, with the grounds and reaſons thereof, to be brought in by us*, and voted us heerto to be a Committee, we yeilded our ſelves to be a Committee, to bring in part by part, in like manner as the Presbyteriall Government was brought into the Aſſembly, and diſputed: but that was not accepted. And then it being ſaid, that there was ſomething in Church-government, remaining undiſcuſſed, and unreſolved; and it being further alledged that the Aſſembly had not ſent up all that which they had concluded, but meant to preſent an entire Frame and Body to the Honorable Houſes,

Houſes: And that we might take away all occaſions of any ſuch jealouſies that we were unwilling to diſcover what we held (which were commonly in mens mouthes abroad) we yeilded to be a Committee, to bring in the whole to this Aſſembly, though upon all the fore-mentioned diſadvantages, and were purpoſed and reſolved amongſt our ſelves ſo to do, and that in as convenient a time as a work of ſuch a compaſſe could, (in ſuch a manner as was propoſed by you) be diſpatched by us. And as in the debate about making us a Committee, the Aſſembly would not declare (though preſſed by us) what they would do with that Modell, and thoſe Reaſons we ſhould bring in; ſo the voting of what yet remained in *Church-government*, was haſtened by you.

And when not long after, upon occaſion of the debate of one particular point, in which we differed from this Aſſembly, we moved it might be deferred, becauſe we ſhould preſent our Judgements and Reaſons about it, with the reſt, (for therein lay that which we accounted the favour of being made a Committee by you) it was publiquely anſwered, *that therefore the Aſſembly ſhould the rather go on to the concluding of it, becauſe we intended to bring it in*; and before we could diſpatch that *Body* we intended, ſo as to report it unto you according to your order; (the collection of the materials whereof, ſpent us two or three moneths, and we could not obtain the liberty to bring in any thing but the whole) this Aſſembly had preſented to the Honorable Houſes, as well what had been ſent up by peeces afore, as what was ſince concluded, in one intire Frame. By all which we perceived, that that which was the main end and uſe of preſenting ſuch a Modell to this Aſſembly, would be fruſtrated.

And furthermore, we having given in (as this Aſſembly knows) but *two heads of diſſenting reaſons*: The one againſt *the Presbyterial government over many Congregations*: The other againſt *the ſubordination of Synods*. By the ſucceſſe of the latter we ſee, that this Aſſembly can aſſume the liberty (if it ſo pleaſe) to reſerve thoſe we ſhall now preſent, unanſwered, as they have done thoſe our diſſenting Reaſons againſt ſubordination of Synods, *although it contain a great and main part of that wherein we differ, as alſo is of all other, of the greateſt moment, both to this Church and State*, and hath been given in to this Aſſembly ten moneths ſince, and their votes concerning theſe-

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Subordinations, as long ſince preſented to the Honorable Houſes, but have not been anſwered by any reply brought in to this Aſſembly, and ſo not ready to have been ſent up to the Honorable Houſes.

And if Theſe we might now bring in, ſhould be undertaken to be anſwered by this Aſſembly, yet we ſtill retain the ſenſe of ſo much remedileſſe prejudice, *by being bound from replying again*, as doth make us juſtly wary: we may for ever lie under whatever miſinterpretations may happen, (ſuppoſe but through miſtake of yours, or imperfection of our expreſſion) without clearing our meaning, and we may be bound up from further urging or driving home that wherein the ſtrength of any Argument lies, if the dint thereof ſhould be avoided by ſome ſpecious diverſion. And although our former Reaſons given in after diſpute to both the Honorable Houſes, according to their Order, were therefore not our own, but to be diſpoſed of according to their appointment; yet what we ſhould now give in, we conceive to be in our own power.

Upon theſe conſiderations we think that this Aſſembly hath no cauſe now to require a *Report* of us, nor will that our *Report* be of any uſe, ſeeing that *Reports* are for *Debates*, and *Debates* are for *Reſults* to be ſent up to the Honorable Houſes, *who have already voted another form of Government then what we ſhall preſent*. However it may be of more uſe ſome other way, which by this courſe may be prevented, And therefore we are reſolved to wait for ſome further opportunitie, to improve what we have prepared.

FINIS.